

**NOAA 2020 Environmental Literacy Program (ELP) Funding Opportunity
Priority 2 Full Applications Informational Teleconference Transcript
October 30, 2019
12:00 pm CT**

Coordinator: Welcome and thank you for standing by. At this time, all participants are in a listen-only mode until the question and answer session of today's conference. At that time you may press star one on your phone to ask a question.

I would like to inform all parties that today's conference is being recorded. If you have any objections you may disconnect at this time. I would now like to turn the conference over to Miss Carrie McDougall. Thank you, you may begin.

(Carrie McDougall): Hello, and welcome to the October 30, 2019 Informational teleconference for priority two of NOAA's fiscal year 2020 Environmental Literacy Program grants funding announcement. You probably know many of us who are on the call today, but we're just going to do a quick round of introductions so you can associate voices with names again and hear who's on the call today. I am (Carrie McDougall), one of the federal program officers for this opportunity, and I'll hand it over to my colleague Sarah.

(Sarah Schoedinger): Hi, this is Sarah Schoedinger, and I'm the other program officer with Carrie for environmental literacy. John, Genie, and Maggie accidentally hung up and so they're dialing back in, so they can't introduce themselves. Nothing like trying to put yourself on mute.

(Carrie McDougall): All right, so it's a great beginning of our call today. You'll hear their voices when we get to the Q&A phase, but just a note that this teleconference is going to be transcribed, and we will post the transcription to our ELP apply page as well as to our frequently asked questions or FAQ website by November 6th. So if you missed something you'll have a chance to go back and look at the transcription.

So you don't have to take furious notes today. So what we'll be doing is beginning with an overview of the funding opportunity. Specifically we will be focusing on priority two, and then we'll take your questions at the end of the call, so if there's anything that comes to mind as I'm going through, as Sarah and I are going through the overview, go ahead and jot that down, and then you'll be able to ask us at the end.

As the operator indicated, you're all muted for this first part of the call conference, and then once we complete the funding opportunity overview, you will have an opportunity to put yourself in the queue and you'll be unmuted and you can ask your question.

So it would be a good idea to have a way that you can look at the funding opportunity while we're overviewing it. The title of the funding opportunity is environmental literacy grants supporting the education of K-12 students and the public for community resilience. You can get

a

copy of this funding opportunity by going to [grants.gov](https://www.grants.gov), and in the upper right hand corner you can search for environmental literacy.

And you should see the opportunity pop up as the first return on that search. And if you haven't gotten one of those funding solicitations, funding opportunity publications yet, you definitely want to get one now, because it's really important that you read the whole thing through. Also because this funding opportunity is soliciting multiple – two different priorities, there are multiple application packages available through [grants.gov](https://www.grants.gov).

You want to make sure you are submitting your application to the correct package. That is the application package for priority two, and the competition ID is 2829585, so just make sure when you're doing your submission that you're submitting the correct application package.

Also if we find any errors in the funding solicitation announcement between now and the due date, we may need to make an update, which we will do through [grants.gov](https://www.grants.gov), but it's a good idea

for you to sign up for those updates so that you automatically get a notification if we do publish any revisions to the funding solicitation, and you can do that by going on grants.gov and signing up for email notifications on a particular funding announcement.

So the funding announcement is called the NOFO, which stands for notice of federal funding opportunity. It used to be called the FFO, and so you'll hear some of us accidentally refer to it by its old name, but basically it's NOFO or FFO, and that basically is the very long and somewhat bureaucratic document that is the primary guidance for you in what we are – the types of projects we're interested in receiving and all of the guidelines for how to construct your application and submit your application.

So as I said earlier, this funding opportunity we are soliciting two types of projects through separate competitive priorities. Priority One will support new projects from applicants located and based in southern and western regions of the United States and territories, and we have a list of those states and territories who are eligible in the full funding announcement.

Those projects must also be implemented in those regions, and when we say new projects, what we mean by new are new to NOAA, meaning not previously funded by – not previously supported through an existing or earlier competitions through the environmental literacy program.

Priority Two, which is the subject of this particular teleconference, is intended to support the continued evolution of environmental literacy program grant projects funded in the 2015 and 2016 competitions. Eligible applicants for this priority are the organizations that received previous awards or their formally recognized partners, and what we mean by formally recognized are those institutions who are identified in the original application that was funded, and they received a sub-award, a sub-contract, and there was a letter of commitment as part of the original submission.

So those are the only eligible applicants for submitting to priority two. And we also have a link

in the funding announcement to all of the projects specifically that are eligible. So note that it's only those first two competitions, so if you were funded through the 2018, the last competition, you are not eligible to submit a priority two application at this time.

However, when we launch the next funding solicitation, which we anticipate doing in the fall of 2021, at that time projects funded in 2018 will be eligible to submit a priority two project. Also note that there is no geographic restriction for priority two projects, as there are with priority one. That's been a point of confusion, and we want to make sure it's clear that priority two, your projects need to be implemented within the United States and its territories, but other than that there is no state-based or regional-based geographic restriction.

Okay, if you aren't eligible for priority two, you want to probably disconnect right now, because this is not going to be relevant for you, and you want to look at the transcripts that we posted for the priority one informational telecon which we did previously. They are already online, and you can read through those transcripts if you're more interested in priority one.

(Sarah Schoedinger): On Priority oOne, just to emphasize, when we say new to NOAA, we mean new to this funding opportunity within NOAA, not new to NOAA overall, but as Carrie specified, you haven't applied for resilience education funding from us through the environmental literacy program.

(Carrie McDougall): Thanks. So as I said before, you want to make sure you read through the entire funding solicitation announcement or the NOFO. It's a lengthy document. I think it's almost 60 pages, but it contains the essential information you need for constructing your project application.

The first – now we're going to go through page by page of the relevant portions, so this is where you – it'd be really ideal if you have a copy either printed or online in front of you and you can follow along as we highlight certain aspects we want to bring to your attention.

So the first few pages of the announcement are really like the abstract for the entire document, and so we're going to skip those first few pages and go to Page 6, which is where really the meat of the notice begins, so you'll see it starts with full announcement text. The first section is called program objectives, and I recommend reading it.

You'll see a lot of it is sort of historical information that you all should be broadly familiar with, so we're not going to belabor the history. As you know, the Environmental Literacy Program has been focused on funding community resilience projects since 2015. We continue to support the resilience for – let me just define resilience, which is on the page, top – second paragraph of Page 7.

Resilience is defined as the capability to anticipate, prepare for, respond to, and recover from significant multi-hazard threats with minimum damage to social well-being, the economy, and the environment. That is taken from the US Global Change Research Program's definition for resilience. And the hazards that we are interested in supporting are the ones that are most closely related to NOAA's mission.

And there's an incomplete list of those hazards on Page 6, and I'll just read them to you really quickly. Hazards include but are not limited to severe storms, tornadoes, hurricanes, flooding, heavy precipitation events, persistent drought, heat waves, increased global temperatures, acidification of the ocean, and sea level rise. So again we're interested in funding the hazards that NOAA most closely monitors.

Just a few highlights from Page 7, studies highlight that educated communities are less vulnerable to environmental hazards, as they are more likely to be prepared for and recover from disasters. US communities can become more resilient by exploring the hazard safe base, assessing their specific vulnerabilities and risks, considering options, prioritizing and planning, and finally taking action.

And those are the steps from the U.S. Climate Resilience Toolkit, and we're still hoping that that

will be a core framework that you all will use as you construct your project. Okay, the bottom paragraph of Page 7 contains the goal of this funding opportunity. And what I want to say before we get into that is especially if you were funded from the 2015 solicitation, we have evolved our thinking on what resilience education looks like.

As you are aware, by participating in our community of practice over the last several years, we've learned a lot from you all. We've learned a lot from others working in the field. We're learning from literature. We're developing our theory of change, as you know. And we have changed instances in certain areas, in particular since the 2015 first solicitation.

So make sure you read through this notice very carefully, and we're going to bring to your attention some of those changes as we go through the FFO today. So for example, the goal of the funding opportunity has changed a little bit from 2015.

So the goal of this funding opportunity is to build environmental literacy of K-12 students and the public so they are knowledgeable in the ways in which their community can become more resilient to extreme weather and other environmental hazards and become involved in achieving that resilience.

And that last part, become involved in achieving that resilience, was added in 2018 so we really expect it to be both about knowledge acquisition as well as taking action. So make sure your project has both of those components. Also the goal of the funding opportunity we say we expect you to build environmental literacy in K-12 students and the public.

That's really an and/or statement. It's not that you have to do it in both of those audiences. You can choose to work exclusively with formal education, or you can work exclusively with the public. You don't have to have a project that serves both audiences. Okay, so the other aspect in this paragraph where – below where I read the goal statement is that this is – reflects an evolution in our thinking.

The literacy that we're referring to whereas your projects will build this literacy within individuals, we do note that not all individuals need to attain the same level of knowledge, skills, and confidence, as long as the community collectively attains sufficient environmental literacy to work together to contribute to the overall well-being of the whole.

So that's also a change in thinking, and so there's – that's a little bit more challenging, to be looking at community-level environmental literacy as opposed to individual level environmental literacy. The very last sentence of that paragraph, efforts to build environmental literacy ultimately aim to contribute to the reduction of risks from current and future environmental hazards through climate smart and inclusive decision making and long-term stewardship of healthy ecosystems, all the while promoting a low carbon economy.

That is an entirely new sentence that was not in the previous funding solicitation, so you can see we are changing the emphasis a bit, and that's really reflective of our theory of change. Our theory of change is available on the website you see at the bottom of the Page 7. We have published to date the end goal and the intermediate goal, and we will plan to publish the rest of the theory of change in December of this year.

So it should be available for you as you are writing your full application. Description of project activities which really starts on Page 8, this is really an essential section of the funding solicitation, and you want to read through this very, very carefully. We're going to spend a little bit of time reading it to you because it really lays out the kinds of projects that we're interested in funding for this round.

So starting on Page 8, projects should build the collective environmental literacy necessary for communities to become more resilient to extreme weather and environmental hazards, stay safe in the short and long term. Building sufficient environmental literacy in a community means these communities are composed of individuals who are supported by formal and informal education that can develop their knowledge, skills, and confidence to reason about the ways that human and actual systems interact globally and where they live, including the acknowledgement

of disproportionately distributed vulnerabilities. Two, participate in scientific and/or civic process, and three, consider scientific uncertainty, cultural knowledge, and diverse community values in decision making. Each individual in a community does not need to develop their knowledge, skills, and confidence to the same extent, but the community should collectively and sufficiently have these capabilities for use in resilience building initiatives.

So you hear that sort of collective environmental literacy emphasis there. So these statements indicate that a project may need to draw on the disciplines of geography, social science, ecological and physical sciences, engineering, and economics. It's really quite a holistic approach to what may have been thought of as traditional science education in the past.

Second paragraph on Page 8, projects should demonstrate how they will engage community members to build these capabilities particularly through active learning. If you're not familiar with active learning, we have a definition we've sort of unpacked here in this paragraph as well as at the end of the funding opportunity.

All right, next paragraph, projects should leverage and incorporate relevant state and local hazard mitigation and/or adaptation plans, and collaborate with individuals and institutions that are involved in efforts to develop or implement those plans. This is another area of evolution since our first publication in 2015. We now really expect a very high level of incorporation of hazard and mitigation or whatever they're called in your particular area.

They're called by a lot of different names, but whatever relevant climate action or hazard mitigation plans are available to you, we really expect those to be at the core of the project, and we also expect to see robust partnerships with the entities who are charged with implementing those plans, whether they be government individuals or non-profit individuals.

So that's really been an area where we've seen a lot of evolution. Next paragraph, projects may focus on a single location or multiple locations, and a single type of environmental hazard or a range of hazards that impact the place where the project will be taking place, the community or

communities.

Projects will be based on the established scientific evidence about current and future extreme weather and other environmental hazards facing communities, and should consider relevant socioeconomic and ecological factors in the targeted locations. Particular attention should be paid to populations within communities that have greater exposure and have fewer resources to deal with the impact of extreme weather and/or environmental hazards that are the focus of the project.

That is a new sentence in this funding solicitation and you'll see that reflected in other language throughout the funding notice. The other thing I want to point out is that this opportunity is not limited to supporting community resilience in coastal communities. Also just to give you a sense of the scale of projects, you all are familiar with this, but just to restate that most projects are implemented on a local level, like city, county, or township, but you can implement in more than one locality. You just make sure to describe – identify and describe the geographic location, the hazards that are facing that location, that will be the focus of the project, and the target audiences and how those groups living in those places may be disproportionately impacted by the identified hazards.

So I already mentioned we don't have a priority – a geographic restriction to priority two other than the US and its territories. Okay, final paragraph on Page 8, you need to have – your project needs to relate to NOAA's mission. You know, kind of obvious, but we have to state it.

Also we expect you to use NOAA's scientific data, data access tools, visualizations, and other physical and intellectual assets available on these topics. We provide a website to help you find those most relevant assets that are listed at the top of Page 9. Moving onto Page 9, first full paragraph, if the project location includes areas that are served by a NOAA Sea Grant college, the National Estuarine Research Reserves, or the National Coastal Zone Management Program or NOAA's RISA program, we strongly recommend considering partnering with those groups.

In particular the RISA program has local climate experts that may be of great use to you as you're working on developing your project. Next paragraph, projects should consider integrating citizen science tools when appropriate. As we've learned through many of your projects that you've done already, citizen science is a critical way to engage participants in resilience issues.

And we know from studies that when applied with intentional design, citizen science tools can result in learning outcomes by participants, help meet scientific project goals, and benefit communities by serving as conduits to data.

So in the next paragraph we provide the URL for the Office of Education's resilience hub. This is a fairly new asset that we have created to try to consolidate and serve as a portal for all of the resilience related best practices, publications, and a list of assets. So you'll find that the last two workshop reports from our meetings, the community of practice meetings, are available there.

The theory of change is there, the link to NOAA's resilience assets is there. So that's a really – a wealth of resources that we hope will be helpful for you as you construct your project. Just as one additional reminder, this funding opportunity has two priorities, numbered without regard to importance for funding. Priority One, that's the – that's where you have the geographic restrictions. That priority will support new projects that are located in the Southern and Western regions of the United States, and those are listed.

And then Priority Two will support the evolution of projects funded under the 2015 and 2016 funding opportunities from this program. On the top of Page 10, you can see there's a Go USA link, and that has the full list of awards that are eligible to submit to Priority Two. So as I said earlier, this call is only for Priority Two. If you're interested in Priority One, you should go and read the transcripts from the teleconferences that have already occurred.

There are also other funding opportunities for resilience projects that NOAA offers, and we list those in the middle of Page 10, so take a look at those, some of your projects may be eligible to

submit to those. All right, so I'm going to now hand it over to Sarah to walk us through the rest of the funding opportunity.

(Sarah Schoedinger): Okay, thanks, Carrie. All right, so now we're down to target audiences on Page 10 of the NOFO. So just as a reminder, target audiences for this funding opportunity are the public, K-12 students, and that's and/or. So that may include for the educators, informal educators, formal educators. That could include school administrators.

The target audiences, however, should not be higher education students and professionals working in the area of community resilience. Those are not target audiences. Those people may be partners on your project. They may receive funding for their efforts on this project, but they are not the target audiences. And just to reiterate, it's a public and/or K to 12 students and their teachers or their educators.

So you don't have to reach all audiences, but you should be reaching some of those. Okay, so moving down to the next paragraph, so there is an interest in projects that specifically engage highly vulnerable members of the community, underserved members of the community such as minority, low income, homeless, persons with disabilities, and rural, tribal, and indigenous populations are disproportionately vulnerable to extreme weather and other environmental hazards.

We want to see projects, should you be engaging these communities, and this is an area where – that we have emphasized more heavily in this funding announcement than we have in prior announcements, and particularly those that were issued in 2015 and 2016. So projects should employ approaches and partnerships that are appropriate for the targeted underserved population.

And now I'm at the top of Page 11. Projects are strongly encouraged to develop meaningful partnerships with community based organizations, particularly those from those underserved communities. And adequate compensation should be provided for community based organization partners and community members for the effort that they are contributing to the project.

Since our 2015 and 2016 funding opportunities, there's a new resource available about – that offers guidelines for excellence in engaging community members, so I draw your attention to that resource. It's really thoughtfully designed and well-researched. We also have an interest in projects that engage children and youth, because they're as we've all learned and many of your projects demonstrated, their involvement benefits not only them but also their communities. So that is also still of interest for us.

And then skipping down to the next paragraph, which is really just one line that says applicants are encouraged to describe the demographics and vulnerabilities of their target audiences and use data to support these assertions. So this is another area, obviously we wanted to have some kind of needs assessment of target populations, regardless of the year in which we've issued our funding announcement.

But this time we're really expecting you to describe very carefully and thoroughly who your target audiences are within your community, and not just offer general characteristics of the overall city, for instance. So just to give you an example, it won't be sufficient this time around to say, well, we're going to be working in the city of San Diego which has X percent of its population living in poverty, and we're going to work with those audiences.

You need to talk about the specific communities or – community or communities within San Diego in this example that you might be dealing with that are particularly vulnerable to the impacts of your designated environmental hazard or hazards. Okay, so moving down to project evaluation, as in previous years, project evaluation is an important component of your proposal and your overall project design.

So we expect all projects will include an evaluation component, if they're going to be competitive, that is. Project descriptions for full applications should include robust evaluation plans. Evaluation plans should include key evaluation questions, measurement of the project's

progress toward meeting the stated project goals and objectives, as well as the goal of this funding program as articulated in the theory of change that Carrie mentioned earlier in this call.

So when we referenced the URL where you can access the goal statement for the theory of change, and we will be updating that, continuing to update that, over the next month, so you have a complete theory of change to reference prior to the deadline for submitting the full application. So your plans for evaluation should include formative and summative project evaluations, and of course should be based on best practices and approaches for the type of work proposed.

We would like to see a discussion of both the formative and summative evaluations in your project description, and you should also have some reference to it in your budget. I'm not going to read the next paragraph on – of this section, but you should pay attention to these details, has to do with culturally relevant evaluation and best practices.

Also wanted to draw your attention, we've always had a requirement for IRB approval, or not a requirement but that you need to address whether you need IRB approval in your evaluation plan. This is something that is coming up more and more in review of – by our lawyers, so we just emphasize it there, so I draw your attention to that.

And then in the third paragraph down here, I just want to read the first couple sentences, here. So your project evaluation should be handled by external professional evaluators or by internal staff who have significant experience with each type of evaluation and are not otherwise substantively involved in the project. And applications should include funding for the project evaluation in their budgets.

I'm going to skip the next paragraph there, you can read that on your own. So now I'm at the top of Page 13, so just wanted to note that we will be making awards no later than September 30, 2020, so we would like to have applications coming in with start dates no earlier than October 1, 2020. And because I know I'll get this question later, yes, you can have late dates that start later than 2020. If it's going to go much beyond six months or something, let's talk.

Okay, I'm going to skip down to program priorities. I just wanted to note, and Carrie's already emphasized this heavily, but we have two funding priorities. They are of equal importance for funding. As she noted priority one will support the quote/unquote new projects and have a geographic restriction to them. So I'm going to skip down and since she's already covered this a bunch, I'm going to skip down to the last – start of the last paragraph at the bottom of Page 13.

So we expect that project – priority two projects will explicitly demonstrate the accomplishments of the previous award and how the project will significantly improve and/or build on the previous award. These projects should also build on best practices and reflect the rationale articulated in our ELP resilience education theory of change.

I'm now at the top of Page 14. You all are a part of our ELP resilience education community of practice, so we would expect you to also incorporate and articulate how you're incorporating the best practices that we have all learned together and that are referenced in our two workshop reports.

I'm now down just the second paragraph or first full paragraph on Page 14. This is just to note that we expect an applicant to submit for a given project idea once and to one priority or the other. So if we see something and it looks like the same institution, the same project idea is coming into priority one and priority two, we're going to be contacting the point of contact for that institution and asking which one you think it goes to and the other one will be withdrawn from the other priority.

Basically, you know, we've created Priority Two for the prior funded projects, and so we don't want people trying to double dip. All right, so now I'm down on award information. Funding availability, so NOAA anticipates that approximately \$3 million will be available in fiscal year 2020 for this announcement, and we hope to make approximately 6 to 10 awards among both priorities in the form of cooperative agreements during fiscal year 2020.

Top ranked proposals not funded in the current fiscal year may be considered for funding in FY 2021 without NOAA repeating the competitive process outlined in this announcement. I'm going to skip down to the bottom of Page 14. Priority Two, for Priority Two projects must be between two and five years in duration, and the total amount requested from NOAA for each project must be no less than \$100,000 and no more than \$500,000 for all years of the project, and that includes direct and indirect costs.

So just note that you know, there's a lower threshold in terms of the total request for priority two than priority one, and that's because we know that many of you, you've got efficiencies already built into your program, and so there shouldn't be a lot of startup costs, and so you may be able to do things more efficiently and economically.

And since we have a flat funding line, we're hoping you'll take advantage of that fact. Okay, so now I'm in the middle of Page 15, and well, actually I've already covered this. Two to five years for project duration is actually a minimum requirement, and if you lift the start date earlier, then October 1 2020 we're going to ask you to revise it, so just be aware of that.

In terms of eligibility information, I'm now at the bottom of Page 15. So I think you all can read that on your own. Basically in terms of priority two, well, actually both priorities, the type of organization is spelled out here, so you know, it can be an institution of higher education, K-12 public and independent schools and school systems and other non-profits.

That includes community-based organizations as well as informal education institutions, state and local government agencies, and Indian tribal governments in the United States. While for profit organizations, foreign institutions and individuals are still not eligible to apply as in past years, but those entities may be project partners.

And I just want to also mention that federal agencies as in the past are not eligible to receive funds through this announcement, but they can be project partners. Okay, I'm at the top of Page 16. Actually I'm going to skip down to the middle, so again I'm not going to read this paragraph

that starts for priority two eligible applicants must be organizations, because Carrie's already emphasized that.

But that's where it is if you need to check if you're not sure. I think most of you probably are, though. So now I'm going to skip down to the next paragraph. So it's strongly encouraged that an individual serve as a PI on only one application submitted to this funding opportunity. So institutions may submit more than one application and individuals may serve as co-PIs or key personnel on more than one application, but we really ask that we not have the same PI and the same institution submitting more than one application.

Now I'm in section III.B on cost-sharing and matching requirement, and basically there isn't one. That's what you need to know there. I'm going to skip the next section, so now I'm at the top of Page 17. I'm not going to read these paragraphs to you, I just want to call your attention to application and submission information. This is where you need to look if you're not sure what you need to do to submit an application through grants.gov, which is the only way we will accept applications.

Now moving down into section IV.B on the content and form of applications, okay, so we're going to go over to the top of Page 18, I just want to call your attention to the URL for our frequently asked questions page for priority two. We have set up different FAQ pages for the two priorities because there are some differences in how you need to apply and deadlines, et cetera, not in terms of differences in terms of using grants.gov, but the details that are contained in the applications themselves.

So look at those if you're not – if you don't have your question answered today during the Q&A, you still have a question, go there first, and if you still have a question then reach out to us. Let's see. I've already covered – these are – we're requesting only full applications from you all, and those will be submitted through grants.gov. there's a specific application package for you to use for that.

Just a note, as in more recent years we have no collaborative applications funded through this announcement, or there won't be any, so we expect to fund single award to an institution, and then that award will have sub-awards to their partners. A good URL to flag for the coming months is the one that you see noted here at the top of Page 18 for what we call our apply page.

And now I'm going to skip down to the bottom of Page 19, which is really where the format and content requirements start for full applications for both priorities. So I'm not going to read the format requirements. You can do that on your own. Same thing in terms of I'm going to just highlight things in the content requirements, but I'm not going to read them, so you know, just noting that there are some elements of the full application that are required, and those are elements A through J.

Elements K and L are optional. What a complete application constitutes for certain is K through J, yes, and element K is actually our letters of commitment. You may develop your own checklist. You may already have one, but we also provide one to you on our grants templates and models page, which you can reach through either the FAQ page for priority two, or our apply page.

So just note that there are some required forms. Those are already there for you in grants.gov. And then moving to the top of Page 21, we do provide a title page template, but if you choose not to use that template we list here all of the elements that must be included in your title page, and then moving down to project description, again we provide templates and models for you.

I'm not going to read this section. That's for you to do on your own time, but it is very important to read this – these pages I've just mentioned in coming up very carefully. So between Page 19 and well, and Page 19, all the way through Page 27, really gets into the content and form of your full application. For right now I'm going to actually just skip to Page 26 and call your attention to one of the elements of the application that would not have been required in the 2015 and 2016 competitions.

And that's the inclusion of a logic model. It does have a page limit. We specify what we expect to see in that. It will need to – you will want to consult the resilience education theory of change in developing your logic model, just to make sure that your outcomes are aligned with the program outcomes. The other thing that I mentioned just a moment ago in sub-section K is letters of commitment. So letters of commitment are actually very important in these applications. I think you probably know that if you were a successful recipient in the past.

But you know, we expect to have any substantive partnerships accompanied by letters of commitment, and we want to see them referencing not just like hey, this is a great project and we support it, but like how are they going to be involved? What project components are they going to be contributing to, and how does this project that you're proposing complement their own strategic priorities?

It's also important is they're federal partners that they note that how – that they'll be participating in their activities with you in kind, so they are not expecting to receive funding from us or you for that service. Okay, so moving down to the bottom of Page 27, so – well, actually, I should say the top of Page 28, just note that there are different deadlines for these – for priority one and priority two.

So your deadline that you need to mark on your calendar is February 11th, 2020. You have until 11:59 pm Eastern Standard Time to get your application in through grants.gov. Office of Education staff will only be available up until – will only guarantee we'll be available to reach up until 5:00 pm that day, Eastern Time. I'm going to skip down, so just to note in the middle of the page, there are no funding restrictions specific to this funding announcement other than those that are laid out in the code of federal regulations, which are referenced in other parts of this NOFO.

So now I'm going to skip over to Page 29, and actually Page 29 is where the evaluation criteria starts, but the evaluation criteria that are relevant to priority two applications actually start on Page 32 or really at the top of Page 33. Okay, so I'm not going to read all of these evaluation

criteria. Again, you can do that on your own, but I am going to highlight a few that I think are – have a greater emphasis than they have in the past, and just to draw your attention to them.

However, they're all things that you should look at as you are developing your project narrative and your budget plan and all that. You should be looking back through these and comparing what you're proposing to do with these evaluation criteria, because what's on pages 33 to 35 are the criteria that our reviewers will be asked to use to evaluate your proposals.

So there are six evaluation criteria. Some are more heavily emphasized than others. You can tell what that relative emphasis is by the total number of points that are listed after the high level title, so importance and relevance in applicability of the proposed project to the program goal gets 25 points. Within that you can see a breakdown of the sub-criteria and what we're allocating for those.

That also gives you an indication of what we find relatively important. Again, this is one area if you look down the middle, it says the extent to which the project explicitly demonstrates the accomplishments of this – of the previous award and how the project will significantly improve and/or build on the previous award.

So again this is an area where Priority One and Priority Two applications differ. We're going to expect you all to be able to articulate that well, and we will ask the reviewers to evaluate it within this criterion. Another area, again you know, this is an area where we call out engagement – one area where we call it engagement of underserved communities, as well as involvement of children and youth. It's also where we will ask the reviewers to evaluate how well you incorporate relevant state and local hazard mitigation or adaptation plans and the extent to which you are involving individuals and institutions that are involved in implementing or developing those plans if they're still in development in your project.

So are they a partner with you, or not? How are they advising you on the project? How are they involved? They will be looking at that. Under technical and scientific merit, again, I'm not going

to read all these. I'll just call your attention to – we expect you to describe how your project incorporates resilience education best practices and reflects the rationale of the ELP resilience education theory of change.

So this is one area, because you all are already starting with a higher baseline than some of the newer projects, we're emphasizing that. I'm going to now skip over to the top of Page 34. Before I do that, I do want to just note that for technical and scientific merit, it's 40 out of 100 total points possible. Okay, so now the top of Page 34, the technical and scientific merit criteria continue.

I will just point out that we have a sub-criterion regarding the roles of project partners, the justification of their involvement, whether they are accompanied by letters of commitment and so forth that – and that those letters of commitment articulate how they're involved. Moving on down to overall qualification of the applicant, and that really means your full project team, not just you and your institution.

So that's 20 points total out of 100, and I think the first three are actually similar to what we've had in previous years. The new addition is this last one that has to do with if you're engaging underserved audiences, that there are robust partnerships in place that will ensure the underserved communities' residents and/or other organizations are engaged in the project and that their needs are addressed.

So you want to be working with organizations that represent the members of the community that you're targeting. Project cost is worth 10 points. Again, I'll just point out we've always emphasized that there ought to be some kind of sufficient budget for the evaluation plan. We also are noting here that you know, you need to have sufficient support for the involvement of project partners.

And in particular we call out community based organizations and participants. And the reason we did that is because, when we were looking at how to better address the involvement of

vulnerable and underserved communities in this NOFO, the feedback we got from community-based organization leaders was to make sure that the part they're involved as partners and that there's sufficient resources devoted to their involvement.

Don't just think that we can just show up for free. The outreach and education is similar to what we've had in the past. One additional new one we're required to put in has to do with this data management plan. I think we've required data management plans in the past if you needed one because you were collecting environmental data, and we covered this I think in an FAQ question.

If you're not collecting environmental data, you can simply put in that the project does not need a data management plan because we are not collecting environmental data. And there's some description of that in the previous section on content and form of application as well. Okay, so I'm now in 5B which has to do with the review and selection process on Page 35.

And I'm just going to skip down to the bottom and note the minimum requirements for full applications to Priority One and Priority Two. First of all, you have to be an eligible applicant. Your project needs to be two to five years in duration. It needs to be received on time, and then for Priority Two, your total federal request from NOAA needs to fall between \$100,000 and \$500,000.

Also you must be an organization that either received a previous award in the two funding opportunities noted, or were formally recognized as a partner either by sub-award or letter of commitment. And again this is only for projects that were funded through the 2015 and 2016 competitions. Okay, so now I'm going to skip down to the bottom of Page 36.

So I'm not going to read all of this, but I just want to note that the application, the full applications for Priority One and Priority Two will be reviewed separately, but the process will be similar. So basically we'll get your applications and if they pass minimum requirements, then they will be sent to a panel of reviewers who have relevant expertise and are independent reviewers.

Those reviewers will read and score your applications according to the evaluation criteria I just highlighted. We will convene them in a panel. They will have an opportunity to discuss, rescore, revise comments, et cetera, and then walking out of that meeting we have a rank order. We may choose to fund things in that rank order, or we may not.

And if we choose not to fund things in that rank order, we will apply selection factors which are listed in the section below. I'm not going to read them here. You can read them on your own. But we will have that discussion with our selecting official, who is the director of education, Louisa Koch. So that's the process. It's no different than what we've done in prior years, but just wanted to review that with all of you.

And the key thing to remember about selection factors is we do select out of rank order sometimes, so that means we may not be funding all of the highest ranked proposals, and that's because we want to have a balanced distribution of funds geographically, in terms of types of institutions, partners, project types, and the like.

Okay, so moving on to Page 38, anticipated announcement and awards date, the review of priority two full applications will occur from February through May 2020. It is anticipated that the recommendations for fiscal year 2020 funding under this announcement will be made no later than September 30th, 2020. In reality we'll be contacting you before that if we're planning to try and fund you in fiscal year 2020.

But that is the absolute last date by which we must do that in order to have any hope of funding you and actually before that. For this reason we don't want projects funded under this announcement to start earlier than 1 October 2020. So I'm going to skip – we are now down in section 6, award administration information, Page 38. I'm going to skip reading this. Again, you can read this at your leisure.

And I'm going to skip all the way over to Page 43, and I just want to call your attention to agency contacts. I know many of you already know us. You know Carrie and me, you know John, you know Maggie, Jamie, you may not know Genie, but you'll meet her. Or actually you probably have met her, if you were at our workshop.

So I know you know all of us, but the best way to try and reach us is through OED.grants@noaa.gov, and the reason for that is that all of us have access to that inbox and we can monitor it and check it and so it's not getting hung up in somebody's individual inbox. And we do log all the questions we get, so everyone knows if someone else has answered it kind of thing.

The URL for our main website is listed there as well. The last two pieces of this NOFO, I'll call your attention to but I am not going to read are in section 8, and that is where we provide definitions to some of the terms that we've used in the previous pages as well as the references that we've cited in – throughout this funding announcement. So I'm going to stop there. I've talked a lot, and I think it's time for us to take some questions. So operator, when you're ready.

Coordinator: Thank you. We will now begin the question and answer session. If you would like to ask a question, please press star 1 on your phone and record your name clearly. I do need your name in order to introduce your question. If you choose to withdraw your question please press star 2.

Again, to ask a question please press star one. It will take a few moments for questions to come through. Please stand by. We do have questions coming in. one moment. The first question comes from (Betsy). Your line is open.

(Betsy): Hi. I have a couple questions for you. One was on the data plan. If we're using citizen science projects like CoCoRaHS, National Phenology Network, and getting data through them, should we have a data plan that includes those or do we need a data plan?

(Carrie McDougall): John, do you want to field that?

(John): Yes, so the answer is you should recognize that in that section, that if the data are being collected for research quality purposes, which in the case of CoCoRaHS and some of the other programs you mentioned there, they are indeed, you should acknowledge that and explain that the data will be available. Basically you have up to two years to make the data available, but most of the programs you mentioned I believe do make the data publicly available in near real time, so just make sure you state those facts.

(Betsy): Okay, and then the second question I had, in the grantee workshop report on Page 25 under the resilience education theory of change, you'd talked about ELP participating in an inter-agency effort for climate education, and that you created a common logic model. My questions along that is one, is that common logic model available, and two, should we use it as a template in creating our logic model.

(Sarah Schoedinger): This is Sarah. So it is available, I believe it's available online now. I don't think that you need to use that as your logic model template, and in fact I don't think we specify what your logic model needs to look like, just that you need to have one, and your evaluator can help you with that if you don't already have one, although I know in your case you do.

But so that was kind of background information, and in referencing the theory of change information, I wouldn't go to the workshop report for that. I would go to the resilience hub that Carrie referenced earlier, and there are specific references to the correct URL for accessing our theory of change. The document that was contained in the workshop report was current as of the workshop, but it's evolved since then.

(Betsy): Okay, thanks.

(Sarah Schoedinger): That helps?

(Betsy): Yes, that helps.

Coordinator: One moment. We have more questions coming in. The next question comes from

(Emily). Your line is open.

(Emily): Oh, hi, everybody. So my question is about program design, and because this grant obviously is looking for the evolution of an existing project, albeit with new guidelines that you've created, are you looking for teams to continue the same kind of program design that was present in the original project, or what if we have a new project design or idea that kind of takes the project in a different direction?

(Carrie McDougall): I think that it's a matter of you justifying that. So if you can – I don't think that we're thinking of one or the other. I think it's a matter of you providing rationale and evidence to support a new direction that is based on the work of the previous project, and that's why we used the word evolution. We wanted to kind of choose a word that allowed for some flexibility.

We had been thinking about being more prescriptive when we were first writing the language for priority two, and we decided that we didn't want to be very prescriptive. We wanted to allow you to decide what was an appropriate next step given what you've discovered through your first project. Does that make sense?

(Emily): Yes, yes, thank you.

Coordinator: Again, as a reminder, if you would like to ask a question, please press star one on your phone and record your name. the next question comes from (Rick). Your line is open.

(Rick): Thanks. Had a question about the category. It looks like there's potentially three to five

grants in this category, would you say, compared with – in combination with another three to five in priority one?

(Sarah Schoedinger): We aren't specifying that. There's a reason why we left it deliberately vague and that's we're going to actually not make selection decisions until we get done with both reviews, and see how the proposals fall out, geographic distribution, project types, all of that. So I can't say for certain that yes, we're going to fund definitely three to five in one and three to five in another. It could easily fall out that way, but I'm not going to be on record saying that's definitely going to be the case.

(Rick): Great. And my second question is, we applied in the last round, we were building on our 2015 grant, and we didn't get it. We didn't really get input from the agency on what some of the concerns were with that program idea. Is that something we can kind of get from you at this point?

(Sarah Schoedinger): So I'm confused. Are you saying that you are – that's maybe a question better directed to an email address, because I'd need to know about where you're from, when you submitted. We'd have to go dig back through. Generally we do provide feedback, so I'm surprised that you didn't get it from the reviewers. But my bigger question for you is are you a project partner in a funded project or are you part of a funded project from 2015 and 2016 and are talking about a different project that you also applied for?

(Rick): I worked for Ground Work; it was the global local coastal project, and so we were the applicants and then we in the last round we proposed kind of building on that work, and I just don't recall getting feedback on – not getting that, it's possible we did. But I'm just wondering if there's – if that information is still available if we didn't see it.

(Sarah Schoedinger): We can go back and check and maybe if you can send us an email to oed.grants@noaa.gov we'll address it separately. Like I said, we do provide feedback to – and certainly if Groundwork got funded, then they would have received the feedback, so I'm not

quite sure why you didn't see it in that case.

(Maggie): Hi, this is Maggie. Yes, in 2018 we did email out all of the reviewer comments for those who weren't selected for funding, so I'd also be happy to go back and see the email we sent out to Groundwork in 2018 and see what was included.

(Rick): Okay, thank you, sorry I missed that. And then last, some of the local and state and regional resiliency plans that we would want to incorporate into this proposal are kind of in development as you suggested, so you know, our area isn't totally up to date on some of the issues we're going to be addressing. So hopefully that won't be a big issue. You know, there might not be a final resiliency plan for a specific neighborhood, for example.

(Sarah Schoedinger): So I think again, we do recognize that even if there were plans in place, they get revised, so we're not expecting that – well, you might not be in a situation – we fully expect that you may be in a situation where you're dealing with a plan that's in the middle of being updated or something like that.

So you work with the plan you've got and that's also why we want you working with the people responsible for developing or implementing the plans so that you're getting the most up to date information and also so that they're aware of the tools and resources that your proposed project can actually bring to them in helping them implement their plan.

(Rick): Yes, that's great. Thank you very much.

(Sarah Schoedinger): Okay.

Coordinator: Again, if you would like to ask a question, please press star one on your phone and record your name. One moment. We show no further questions at this time.

(Sarah Schoedinger): Okay, we'll just hang out here for a few more minutes in case there are

some other questions. Give it another minute or two.

Coordinator: Please press star one to ask a question. There is another question coming in, one moment. The next question comes from (Jen). Your line is open.

(Jen): Hi, everybody. This is (Jen). I was curious if you could talk a little bit about projects or proposals that might use assets or products from existing NOAA projects, so for instance like partnering with other existing projects or sort of leveraging our collective resources within this – within the priority two guidelines. Thanks.

(Carrie McDougall): Yes, I mean, I think that would be great if it makes sense. I mean, we saw that with the only second phase project we've funded so far, which is at the Museum of Science, Boston, and he has been incorporating some of you all's work in his second phase project, and I think it's been working well.

And I think that's one of the things we're hoping to see and what we're just attempting to facilitate through the community of practice, and if you need help identifying products, feel free to contact us and we can attempt to connect you, although you can also email the ELP Google Group to ask if you're seeking anything specific. But that is one thing that we would love to see is more broad utilization of products that other grantees have created that they've found to be effective.

(Jen): Okay, great, thanks, Carrie.

Coordinator: The next question comes from Mary Bechhi. Your line is open.

(Mary Bechhi): Oh, hello. I wonder if you could just go back for a second to – it was Page 12 of – it's in the project evaluation, where it talks about a needs assessment, and my question is: do I understand correctly that if we're working in a variation of the same project, do we still need to – what would a needs assessment look like if we are still working within the same communities?

Or is that the type of thing you actually want us to evolve out of?

(Sarah Schoedinger): Whether you're working with the same communities but with different approaches, or working with different communities, that's up to you to justify. Keep in mind that the reviewers who are reviewing these proposals will not know what you submitted in prior years. They will not have access to those proposals, so your application needs to stand on its own.

And they will be looking to see how you're justifying the target audiences. You certainly can reference if you choose to work with the same communities, because there's still significant need there, you just need to talk about what that need is, how you've determined that need. That can also include the work that you've done with them and what you've learned over the last few years.

But we also would expect that it would include things like demographic data and other sort of third party sources of information, talk about why they're an audience with particular vulnerabilities to whatever your hazards are that you're focused on in your application.

(Mary Bechhi): Okay, thank you.

Coordinator: If you would like to ask a question, please press star one on your phone. I show no further questions at this time.

(Sarah Schoedinger): Okay, give it another minute and then we'll have some concluding remarks.

Coordinator: We show – still show no further questions.

John: All right, all, this is John. As we are not hearing any further questions, we are going to move on to our concluding remarks. Again as you've heard we'd like to emphasize the importance of reading the notice of federal funding, known as the NOFO. We also want to

remind you that resources to aid in your applications are available on our resilience hub, the URL to which is provided in said NOFO.

We anticipate this priority to be competitive, like the recent competitions we've offered. If you find you have additional questions after this teleconference and reading the NOFO thoroughly please review our frequently asked questions for Priority Two page, the URL to which is provided in the NOFO to see if your question is answered there.

If it is not and you need to reach us, the best way to submit your questions is to make them as specific as possible and email them to oed.grants@noaa.gov. And that address is also published in the NOFO, and will go to our entire team. If you have technical issues with the grants.gov system, please direct those to their customer service at support@grants.gov. If you do direct them to us, we are not well-equipped to handle them and will likely just advise you to contact their support desk.

Following this teleconference we'll post the transcription to our Priority Two frequently asked questions page as well as our apply page by November 6th, 2019. We thank you for your attention today and your interest in this opportunity, and we hope this teleconference provided answers to most of your questions. We are signing off now.

Coordinator: That does conclude today's conference. Thank you for participating. You may disconnect at this time. Speakers, please allow a moment of silence and stand by for your post-conference.

END